

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid comprising ~~any one of the following:~~
- (a) a nucleic acid sequence encoding the a polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 2 or the complement of said nucleic acid sequence;
  - (b) ~~a nucleic acid sequence at least 90% identical to the nucleic acid sequence of (a) above;~~
  - (c) ~~a nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide wherein the polypeptide has conservative amino acid substitutions to the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 2; or~~
  - (d) ~~a fragment of the nucleic acid sequence of (a), (b) or (c) above wherein the fragment comprises at least 20 nucleotides.~~
2. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein said nucleic acid is selected from the group consisting of DNA and RNA.
3. (Currently Amended) ~~The nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein said~~ An isolated nucleic acid comprising ~~comprises~~ an open reading frame that encodes a mature polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 2 or its complement ~~or a mutant or variant thereof.~~
4. (Currently Amended) ~~The nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein said~~ An isolated nucleic acid comprising ~~comprises~~ a nucleic acid sequence which is SEQ ID NO: 1 or its complement.
5. (Currently Amended) The nucleic acid of claim 3 wherein said nucleic acid encodes amino acids 23-170 ~~a mature form of the polypeptide comprising an amino acid~~ of SEQ ID NO: 2.
6. (Currently Amended) ~~The nucleic acid of claim 4 wherein said~~ An isolated nucleic acid encoding ~~encodes~~ a polypeptide, wherein said polypeptide has a single conservative amino acid substitution relative to the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 2, or its complement ~~comprising an amino acid of SEQ ID NO: 2, a mutant or variant thereof.~~
7. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid ~~oligonucleotide sequence~~ that is ~~complementary to and~~ hybridizes under stringent conditions with the nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein said stringent conditions comprise hybridization in a high salt buffer comprising 6X SSC, 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 1 mM EDTA, 0.02% PVP, 0.02% Ficoll, 0.02% BSA, and 500 mg/ml denatured salmon sperm DNA at 65°C.

8. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid that hybridizes under stringent conditions with the nucleic acid ~~The oligonucleotide sequence of claim 7 that is complementary to at least a portion of the nucleotide sequence~~ of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein said stringent conditions comprise hybridization in a high salt buffer comprising 6X SSC, 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 1 mM EDTA, 0.02% PVP, 0.02% Ficoll, 0.02% BSA, and 500 mg/ml denatured salmon sperm DNA at 65°C.
9. (Canceled).
10. (Original) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 1.
11. (Original) A cell comprising the vector of claim 10.
12. (Currently Amended) The cell of claim 11 wherein said cell is a prokaryotic or eukaryotic cell ~~comprising the nucleic acid sequence which is SEQ ID NO: 1, its complement, or a mutant or a variant thereof.~~
13. (Currently amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ composition comprising the nucleic acid of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
14. (Amended herein). A process for producing a polypeptide ~~encoded by the nucleic acid of claim 1~~, said process comprising:
- a) providing the cell of claim 11;
  - b) culturing said cell under conditions sufficient to express said polypeptide; and
  - c) recovering said polypeptide,
- thereby producing said polypeptide.
15. (Original) The process of claim 14 wherein said cell is a prokaryotic or eukaryotic cell.
16. (Canceled).
17. (Canceled).
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